1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

The social development which these processes entailed represented no steady internal evolution, had been sought by no part of the population, and corresponded to no inventiveness of spirit. It had been imposed from without, partly by pressure of world discoveries such as steamship and telegraph, partly by the largely unintended impact of the West at many points, partly by Government action; and it had been accepted without discrimination. Ideas of doubtful value, glib catchwords from European politics, social observances strange to the East, had been welcomed because new, with little knowledge of their significance. There was no care for the true bases of European thought or virtue.

Meanwhile it was all too obvious that 'Iraq society, whatever the merits, the humanity or social gifts of its members, was afflicted by serious evils. The level of enlightenment was low by any standards, gross superstition was rife, women were treated as inferior beings. Security was uncertain even in the towns, thanks to unpunished crime and the survival of a bullying fanaticism directed, in bad times, at the minorities. Malnutrition was the lot of four-fifths of the population. The infant death rate was among the highest in the world. Many diseases were endemic because untreated, and combined to produce a race physically mediocre or inferior; such were malaria, sand-fly fever, bilharzia, hookworm, dysentery, typhoid, smallpox, the venereal diseases, and epidemic cholera. And dominating all lay the pervasive curse of poverty, removable only by fundamental changes in the whole territory's economy. A new spirit, new use of resources, almost a new race of men would be needed before this evil could be cured by a realization of the country's vast possibilities and by a new social attitude. 'Iraq in 1900 was a society of blighting shabbiness, low standards, and all the vices of the hungry and unsatisfied.

In appearance and amenities the 'Iraqi towns had by 1900 changed little for centuries. The same locally varying building materials, the same design of house, mosque, and bazaar, the same traditional ornamentation united the planless and crowded settlements of the nineteenth with those of the sixteenth century. Streets nowhere permitted the passage of wheeled traffic; huddled narrow lanes provided bare space for donkeys or porters to carry their loads. Only a few new buildings, and these of ancient pattern, varied the limits of the older towns or formed the new Basra suburb of 'Ashar or the 'Amara river front. Baghdad remained within its line of rubble heaps which had been walls, Mosul had spread the beginnings of a new quarter outside its narrower ring; the walls of Basra were in ruins, those of Kirkuk or Arbil barely remembered. The bazaars and warehouses, commercial heart of the townships, were guarded by watchmen-contractors whose

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

technique included blackmail. Rickety boat-bridges served a dozen of the riverain towns. Street lighting consisted, at the best, of a few battered oil-lamps. Water was supplied by donkey-borne waterskins from the river, or from polluted wells in private courtyards; only in Baghdad was a single quarter of the town furnished by pipes with silt-laden untreated water. Municipal street-sweepers maintained some appearance of decency in the main lanes and bazaars, while filth and stenches abounded in the rest. Every town and larger village had cemeteries in its midst or on its fringes. Khans for caravans or wayfarers were found everywhere; hotels approaching the lowest European standard existed only in Baghdad.

Municipal administration was entrusted, save in unorganized villages, to a Mayor and his council. These functionaries, elected by procedures which could amount to Government nomination, enjoyed some local prestige; but their powers in practice were limited so rigidly that the local Governor in fact controlled all projects and all expenditure. Baghdad in the 'nineties was divided into three *baladiyas*, two for the left bank and one for the right. The Mayor was a member or nominee of one of its leading families or, rarely, a Government official. Municipal law was not inadequate, the code of taxation and procedure meticulous, its sphere of nominal activity reasonable. But in practice these administrations were corrupt and futile, and effective chiefly in providing a salary for a city notable and free servants for the local Governor. Nevertheless, pride of city was not lacking and schemes of town improvement were popular topics throughout decades of inactivity.

The picture of urban society of the period must embrace varying scenes. Baṣra with its miles of date gardens and network of tidal creeks, the activity of its riverain suburb—the sole seaport of 'Iraq—its daily contacts with Najd and Muḥammara, its rich garden-owning notables, its cosmopolitan merchants and agents, had a character unique in 'Iraq. Of the other towns of Baṣra sanjaq, Qurna was tribe-dominated, the growing village of Abu al-Khaṣib non-tribal, and Zubayr a desert-fringe town ruled by a hereditary Shaykh. Among Baṣra's leading families were those of the Naqib, and the houses of Basha'yan, Mandil, and Ṣani'.

Baghdad city with a mainly Sunni right bank and an all-Shi'i and largely Persian left, and its important suburbs of Kadhimiya, Mu'adhdham, and Qarara formed by far the greatest commercial centre in the wilayas. It was industrially important, administratively and militarily dominant. The city was mean, without modern improvements, without protection against river floods; it was adorned only by two or three monuments and mosques of interest and by the great shrine of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Gaylani. With

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

Dulaym, and the southern Desert. At Police headquarters, control of the specialized departments of criminal and 'special' investigation, of finger-prints, passports, and training passed in these years from British into 'Iraqi hands. The Police strength, less than 3,000 early in 1921, was to exceed 8,000 ten years later: during the same period British police officers were reduced from twenty-two to twelve, 'Iraqi officers increased from two to sixty. Great progress was made in the Department of Civil Jails where, under all-'Iraqi management after 1923, prison industries were developed.

The urban life of 'Iraq, which in these years was taking its modern form and showing its differences of scene and atmosphere from those of the Turkish era, was sadly hampered in its development by poverty. This limited the activities both of the municipalities and of those central Government departments whose work was chiefly urban. Nevertheless, the upkeep and cleanness, the lighting and watering of streets, the maintenance of municipal offices and institutions, and the honesty and energy of Baladiya staffs, all showed a pronounced improvement on Turkish standards. The wearing of the characteristic 'Iraqi urban head-dress—the *sidara*, which superseded the Turkish fez—became universal in the towns. European dress, impeccable in 'Iraqi upper-class and professional circles, was adopted by more and more townsmen and by many tribal leaders who frequented the capital. Mosul was transformed, with its new streets, bridge, water-supply, public buildings, and gardens. Baṣra, extended threefold by the legacy of war-time port and base development, and now uniting the suburbs of 'Ashar, Ma'qil, and Makina, boasted new bridges, improved streets, 'Iraq's finest hospital (the Maude Memorial), and new buildings domestic and commercial. Baghdad, whose municipality ranked as a separate province in the Government hierarchy under the Amin al-'Aṣima (Guardian of the Capital), could show new buildings—the imposing College of Al al-Bayt, the Royal Pavilion, the Maude statue, and others. It possessed a modern fire service, hotels of Western type, adequate shops including some European, an improved water-supply system, branches of three banks—the Eastern, Ottoman, and Imperial Bank of Persia—scores of agencies for European goods, clubs both British and 'Iraqi, municipal dispensaries, a municipal Court. Its streets, however unplanned and still unpaved, were well lighted, crowded with wheeled traffic, and attempting wider alignment and cleaner upkeep; the adaptation of the old Tramway Concession of 1912 was still under debate. In the smaller municipalities, inadequate as were their resources compared with their requirements as now conceived, there were signs of new life in completed or initiated schemes of electric lighting, street clearance, bridges, town gardens, and a host of minor projects for which local pride was clamoring.

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

old, mere trouble and recalcitrance, but a contribution both economically and politically valuable to a modern State.

In the towns, an observer of conditions in 1950 was faced with the same dilemma as in the tribes: how extensive was the change, if any, which fifty years had brought about? Outwardly at least, it was considerable. If some parts of the towns were as narrow, airless, and planless as of old—if the same donkeys carried the same goods for sale amid the flies and jostling of the same bazaars—yet in the main traffic streets and the new quarters all was changed and unrecognizable; and modernized surroundings, with the public State services now maintained, could not but contribute to the sum of urban well-being. All the larger towns had improved approaches, modern suburbs ranging from a few villas to whole areas of planned streets, planted boulevards, public gardens, and modern public buildings[1] immensely superior to those of Ottoman Turkey, few and cheaply constructed as these buildings had been forced to be.[2] Street-cleaning services were—save perhaps in the labyrinth of an 'old quarter'—not inadequate; streets were well maintained, increasingly paved, and widened where possible. Town planning schemes were under execution with the inclusion, or the hope, of house-building developments for the working poor and for Government officials; and private enterprise in building was encouraged by the improved security, the well-kept title-registers, the development of town amenities, and the need for outlets for safe investment. In the capital a modern omnibus service—the autonomous Baghdad Passenger Transport Board—supplied all needs and would naturally be, as in Baṣra it had been, imitated in the provincial towns. Taxicabs were everywhere abundant and in Baghdad had nearly, but not quite, driven the ancient *'arabana* from the streets. Traffic control was excellent. Steel or masonry bridges had in many places besides Baghdad and Mosul replaced the primitive pontoon river crossings. Modern shops had come year by year into existence, and could provide buyers of all classes with all but exceptional needs. Hotels offered a near approach to normal European service. The cinema was well established; American, European, and Egyptian films were shown in some sixty picture-theatres throughout 'Iraq. Efficient fire services existed in the principal towns, and had well justified themselves. Systems of piped water and electrical installations for power and lighting had been constructed in all larger towns; the

[1] The mausoleum of King Faysal I, built in 1934–6, is usually accounted the finest modern building in 'Iraq.

[2] Large sums were however allotted by the Development Board to building projects for the period 1951–6: for hospitals and health institutions, ID 5,400,000: for schools, 5,400,000: for other public buildings, 5,250,000: and for housing (officials and the poor), 1,650,000.

7: International Bank N, S-4 (1951) 1952 MH1 Iraq MH1

V. Roads

Organization

Iraq's road system is controlled and maintained by the Public Works Department under the Minister of Communications and Public Works. It is headed by the Director General of Public Works and under his direction five divisional engineers assure the maintenance and works service in divisions centered in Baghdad (four provinces), Hilla (three provinces), Basra (three provinces), Kirkuk (two provinces) and Mosul (two provinces). A sixth divisional engineer is in charge of central operations in the capital. District engineers, usually stationed at the provincial capitals, are in charge of day-to-day maintenance. Planning is carried out at the headquarters of the Director General. There is a lack of technical staff to carry out surveys in the field. Except for this fact, the organization is efficient and effective. It may have to be expanded as the road construction program progresses. Provincial governments and municipalities control secondary and urban roads and streets.

At present the road system controlled and maintained by the Public Works Department consists of approximately

2,500 kilometers metalled and surfaced,
500 kilometers metalled only,
5,000 kilometers earth roads.

Many of the metalled roads were built in the two war periods, and most of them are concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the capital, between Baghdad and the East and North, and in the North. All the roads in the southern plains are earth roads, and their maintenance and use suffers from the effects of rains on the salt-impregnated soil. Roads within municipal boundaries are generally in a very poor state of repair, not excluding the streets in the capital. Roads in the Basra Port area are controlled and maintained by the Port Directorate and are in good repair.

Maintenance was, until a few years ago, extremely poor, but today every effort is being made, and with conspicuous success, at least to prevent further deterioration. Maintenance costs are allocated on the Ministry's budget and calculated at ID 40 per

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of all road users as well as their passengers and cargoes. The expectation of increased road traffic makes it imperative that appropriate measures of control be devised without delay.

The following measures are suggested for adoption:

1. Construction of road weighbridges at suitable check points.
2. Compulsory inspection of all vehicles carrying passengers for payment and of all trucks before a periodic license is issued.
3. Appointment of qualified inspectors with sufficient authority and responsibility to ensure adequate enforcement of vehicle regulations.

With the development of traffic on the new highways it will be necessary to introduce and enforce proper traffic rules and regulations. The Mission, therefore, recommends that a highway code be drawn up and that traffic police be instructed and trained in the application and enforcement of the code.

Traffic conditions in the capital are at certain times of the day chaotic, even though city traffic is by no means dense. It would appear that, with training, the formidable force of traffic police now regulating the city's traffic could without expansion serve for traffic control on the country's highway system as well. It would pay the government to engage the services of a traffic expert, preferably from a metropolitan police such as London's, for a limited period, to design the highway code and to instruct the traffic police.

Public Road Transport

It will become increasingly necessary to regulate public road transport of passengers and goods by a licensing system. If this transport is left entirely free and uncontrolled, chaos will be the result; too many operators are likely to engage in public transport, run their services on borrowed money, find their vehicles run down before the loans are repaid and end in bankruptcy. The country's economy will suffer both from the waste of resources involved in such uneconomic ventures and from the probable need of protecting the railways by subsidies from the consequences of such wasteful operations. A reasonable number of capable private operators should provide healthy competition among themselves and with the railway.

7: International Bank N, S-4 (1951) 1952 MH1 Iraq MH1

XII. Projected Cost of Proposed Programs

The projects recommended for consideration are summarized below as to cost and time of realization. The total cost which the Development Board might have to defray over the next five years would be approximately ID 31,000,000.

TABLE 11

COST OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS SUGGESTED FOR DEVELOPMENT BOARD FINANCING

Project	Costs (in dinars)	Period (years)
PORT		
New channel	2,000,000	4
INLAND WATER TRANSPORT		
Study of river training by experts	Token	2
RAILWAYS		
Baghdad Station commitment	143,000	1
Baghdad new layout, provisional	100,000	1
22 continuation and completion projects under way	213,770	1
labor quarters	341,000	4
Rehabilitation and modernization projects	500,000	5
Renewals including diesel traction	6,300,000[a]	5
Extra for gauge conversion (tentative)	6,000,000	6
ROADS		
Trunk road system	14,500,000	10
Secondary road system	4,000,000	5
Road transport control	Token	1
URBAN TRANSPORT		
Baghdad transport services, workshops, garages and vehicles	500,000	3
AIRPORTS		
Baghdad development	300,000	2
Basra development	[b]	2
AIRLINES		
Iraqi Airways	600,000	4
POST, TELEGRAPH, TELEPHONE, RADIO		
Telephone extensions and buildings (if not financed from Communications budget)	300,000	Annually
Auxiliary power plant for transmitter	30,000	1
SURVEYS AND MAPPING		
Air surveys	40,000	Annually

[a] On assumption of gauge conversion.
[b] To be financed by Port of Basra.

7: International Bank N, S-4 (1951) 1952 MH1 Iraq MH1

361 The development of the new parts of the cities is in striking
363 contrast to the old. Broad tree-lined boulevards have been laid out in the form of dual carriage-ways, the dividing strip being ornamented with flowers and shrubs. Along these boulevards there has been intermittent residential building activity, so that vacant lots alternate with the houses and gardens of the well-to-do. In Baghdad, particularly, many of these vacant lots have been occupied by squatters. In the largest cities, the new boulevards and the main streets are paved, but the paving is apparently of poor construction, as it has deteriorated rapidly. In the other cities and towns, however, the streets have merely been graded.

365 Most towns with a population of over 6,000, and a few smaller one, have both a piped water supply and an electricity system, which are, with three major exceptions, managed by municipal boards under the direction of the Ministry of Interior. The water is, however, not always purified and the electricity is invariably expensive. No city, not even Baghdad, has a sewage system. Waste water is disposed of into cesspools or allowed to run into the streets where it is apt to collect in stagnant pools.

The Lack of Coordination in Urban Planning

361 In spite of their superficially impressive appearance, the new sections of the cities have not been properly planned. Streets and traffic circles have been laid out according to prescribed geometrical patterns without paying much attention to their functions or to the need for creating integrated residential areas with appropriate housing for the different income groups and provision for schools, shops and hospitals or clinics. In the largest cities, the importance of allocating zones for different purposes and of establishing a proper interrelation between the zones has been largely neglected. Growth has been, in fact, piecemeal and spasmodic rather than coordinated and regular, and emphasis has been placed more on the ornamental than on the useful. Some traffic circles, for example, are unnecessary; others are even safety hazards. The practical value of new streets is vitiated by the common and dangerous practices of using both carriage-ways in both directions and of taking short cuts in the wrong direction around traffic circles. Sometimes streets have been ruthlessly cut or widened through built-up areas

St Harrison D-4 (1919-1924) 1924 MI Middle East
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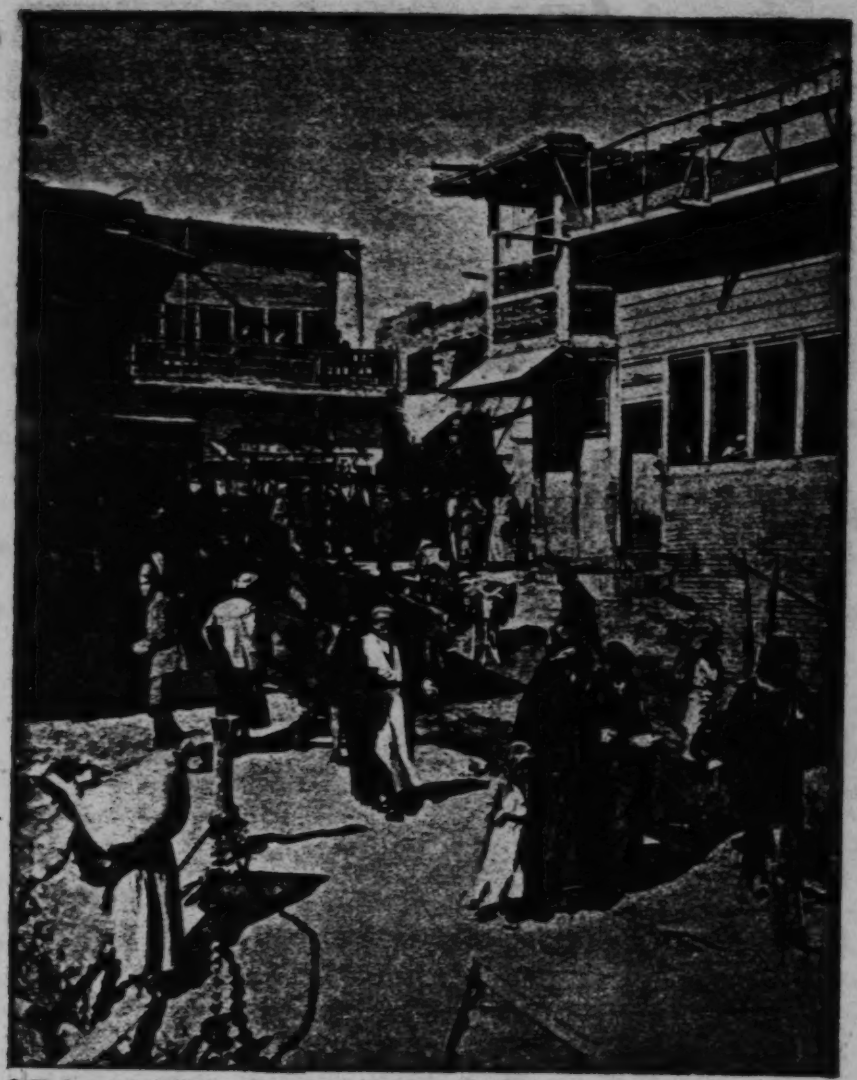

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A SCENE IN BAGHDAD

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5: Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
Iraq MH1

try rather than fostering the development of something indigenous and natural. Under such a system the enforcement of law may become of necessity very mechanical, as when an Indian Sepoy nearly knocks down an inoffensive Arab pedestrian by a blow with his fist for no greater crime than walking on the wrong side of the road to avoid a mud puddle. In the courts, too, a crowd of lawyers and an abundance of red tape, with venal underlings, may serve to make the paths of justice tortuous and uncertain in spite of the best intentions on the part of the presiding judge.

Nevertheless, even under such handicaps as those we have indicated, there is no questioning the very great material progress that is to be seen in Mesopotamia. Even before the war one of Baghdad's streets was paved, and since the British have taken over the administration of the kingdom, all sorts of improvements have been introduced. The railroad system of the country now extends 360 miles from Basra to Baghdad and from there on nearly to Mosul. There are several subsidiary lines, the total amounting to over 1000 miles. By far the greater part of this mileage was constructed by the British for war purposes. Under British rule, also, the Hindiya Barrage and other less important irrigation works have been kept in order and improved and extensive harbor improvements at Basra undertaken.

British sanitary and health officers have been appointed for Mesopotamia and no praise is too high for their largely unappreciated but nevertheless unselfish and extremely efficient labors in that country. The hospital work that has been undertaken in Basra, Baghdad and Amara, the inspection of eating houses, and the maintaining of sanitary conditions have been excellently done.